



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Snow Survey Office
Denver Federal Center
PO Box 25426
Denver, CO 80225-0426
<http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov>

NEWS

Mage Hultstrand (720) 544-2855

NORMAL SNOWPACK CONDITIONS PREVAIL ACROSS COLORADO

Denver, CO – January 6, 2014: Thanks to significant early season snowfall across Colorado, the state is enjoying the best start to a winter season since 2011. Snow accumulation in the mountains was above normal during October, November and early December. This beneficial moisture dried up a bit during the second half of December, especially in the south and southwest portions of the state, but the good start to the season still leaves us with slightly above normal conditions statewide as of January 1. This year's January 1 snowpack readings are at 103 percent of median statewide, according to Phyllis Ann Philipps, State Conservationist with the NRCS. "This is a great start to the 2014 water year. As we saw in 2012 and 2013, early seasons deficits are difficult to make up later in the season; so being right where we should be this time of year gives us a head start compared to the past couple of years", said Philipps.

There is currently not much variance in snowpack conditions between the major basins in Colorado. January 1 snowpack totals range from 111 percent of median in the Yampa, White and North Platte basins to 99 percent of median in both the Rio Grande and South Platte basins. These encouraging January 1 snowpack totals have led to decent streamflow forecasts for the spring and summer season. Streamflows in the Colorado, South Platte, Yampa, White, and Arkansas River basins are currently expected to be in the 90 to 100 percent of normal

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range. In the Rio Grande, Gunnison and San Juan basins forecasts as of January 1 are in the 80 to 100 percent of normal range.

Reservoir storage in some of the major basins benefitted from the large precipitation events this past fall. Statewide storage is currently at 87 percent of average, with the Colorado, South Platte, and Yampa/White basins all holding water at near to above normal totals. Storage in the other major basins remains below normal but is above where it was last year at this same time.

All in all, these early season conditions are favorable leading into the bulk of the snow accumulation season. If weather patterns persist and continue to provide moisture to our state this could be a good year for water supply and recreation in Colorado.

The table below shows a summary of Colorado's snowpack totals and reservoir storage as of January 1, 2014.

BASIN	CURRENT SNOWPACK AS A % OF MEDIAN	CURRENT SNOWPACK AS A % OF LAST YR'S	% AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE	LAST YR'S RESERVOIR STORAGE % AVERAGE
GUNNISON	107	155	80	68
COLORADO	102	141	98	69
SOUTH PLATTE	99	144	105	77
NORTH PLATTE	113	137	---	---
YAMPA/WHITE	106	132	118	100
ARKANSAS	106	190	67	56
RIO GRANDE	99	152	64	50
SAN JUAN, ANIMAS, DOLORES, SAN MIGUEL	100	146	69	66
STATEWIDE	103	146	87	67

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